

NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Reptilia, Colubridae, *Philodryas aestivus*: Distribution extension.

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Philodryas aestivus (Duméril, Bibron & Duméril 1854) is a Neotropical snake, distributed in South America in Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina. It is a typical grassland dweller (Giraud 2001). The species has a wide geographic distribution in Argentina, comprising the provinces of Buenos Aires, Córdoba, Santiago del Estero, Chaco, Entre Ríos, Santa Fé, Formosa, Corrientes and Misiones (Ceí 1993). However, in Buenos Aires there are only isolated records restricted to the northeastern part of the province (Williams and Wichmann 1989) and Sierra de la Ventana (Couturier and Grisolia 1989) in the south.

In spring of 2006, we found an adult green snake (Figures 1 and 2) in the Atlantic coastal zone of southern Buenos Aires (Figure 3), ca. 170 km southeast from its previously known southernmost distribution area of Sierra de La Ventana. We observed the specimen on a bare-soil sandy plain at the Quequén Salado River mouth (38°55'44.43" S, 60°30'42.02" W), next to a marine beach, 5 km east from Marisol village (Partido de Coronel Dorrego). Due to lack of authorization for specimen collection, we photographed the snake with a high resolution digital camera, which made possible its determination as a *Philodryas aestivus*. The pictures are stored in the Museum of Natural Sciences of La Plata (cf. 0047-0050).



Figure 1. Green snake (*Philodryas aestivus*) found at the mouth of river Quequén Salado, Buenos Aires.

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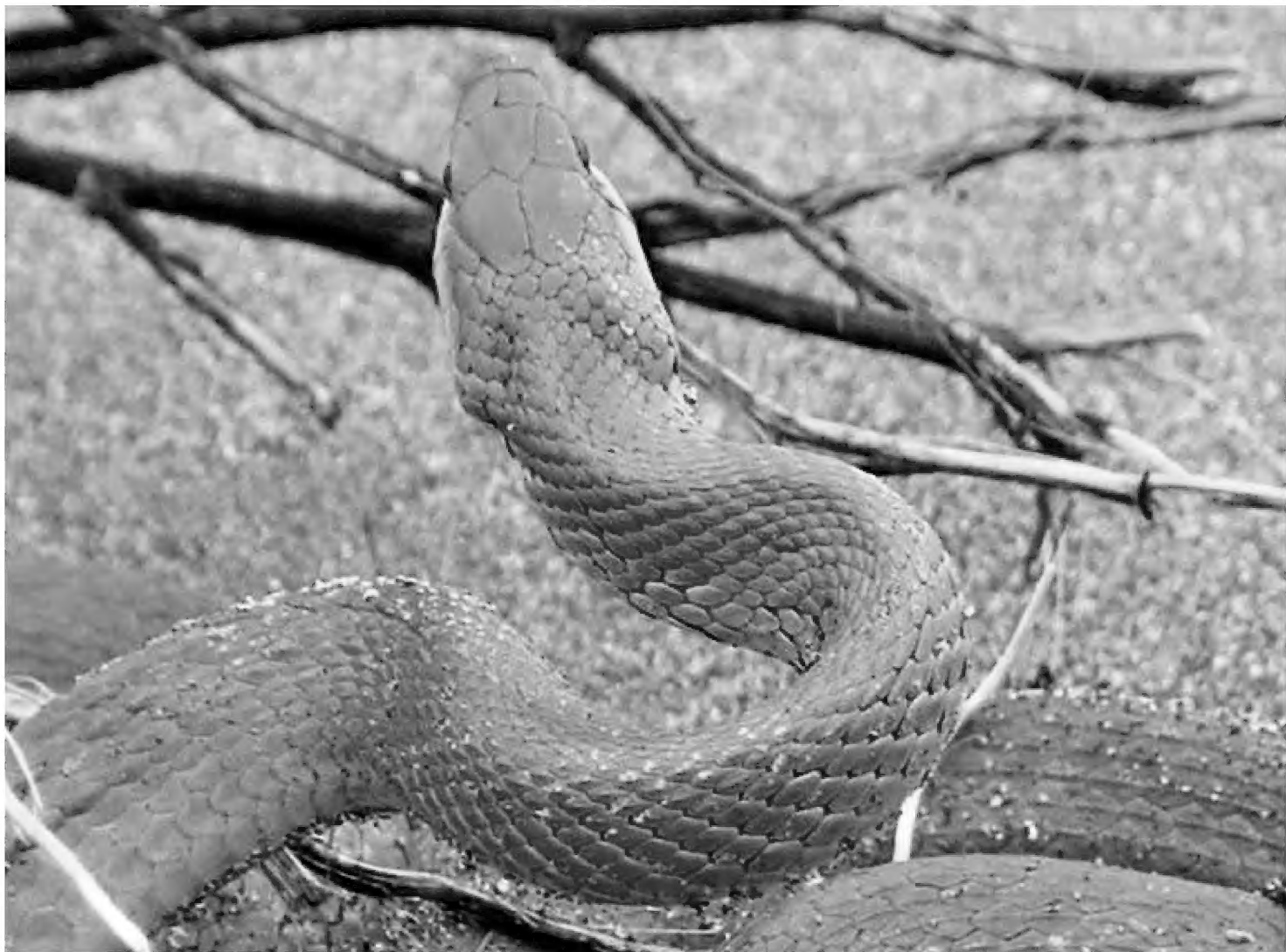


Figure 2. Detail of specimen’s cephalic scales.

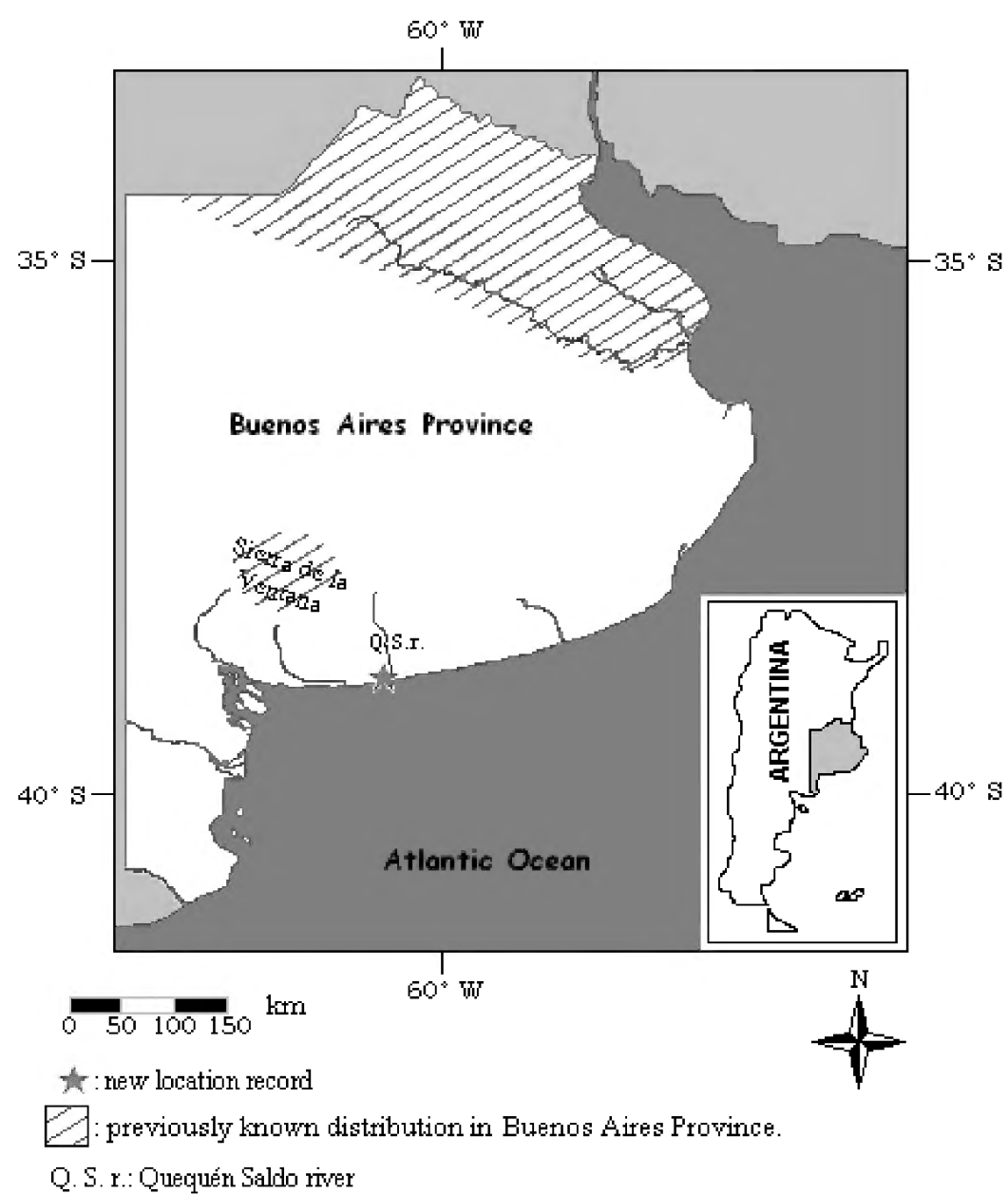


Figure 3. Map of the province of Buenos Aires, Argentina, indicating previously known distribution areas and the new location record for *Philodryas aestivus*. Northern distribution based on Cei (1993).

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This record could indicate a new southern limit for the species distribution range, and provides information on the snake's presence in coastal Pampean environments, a type of habitat for which no previous reports were available in Argentina (Kacoliris et al. 2006). Given that the tributary watercourses of the Quequén Salado River come from southern Buenos Aires mountain region, the new record suggests that this river could be acting as a fauna corridor, connecting the mountain zone with the Pampean coastal zone.

Acknowledgements

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